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ABSTRACT

Patterns that emerged from reviewing syllabi for courses on educational policy are discussed, and two sample syllabi are presented. These courses are offered as part of graduate level studies in the field of higher education administration. Review of seven syllabi and three brief course descriptions indicated that the subject of educational policy is treated differently among colleges. It appeared that educational policy courses in higher education included introductory courses utilizing the term "policy" to denote fundamental issues and purposes, as well as complex social, economic, and political relationships. In addition, mid-level courses focused on federal and state relations and the process for formulating policy at these levels. Finally, more specialized courses applied concepts of politics and methods of policy analysis to the study of higher education at federal, state, and institutional levels. It is recommended that distinctions be made between the more generic, "issues-based" use of the term policy and the more specific practices of policy formation and policy analysis. Required readings for the five courses with detailed syllabi were diverse, and nothing approaching a "text" in this area was found. Twelve supplementary readings are identified, and a sample syllabus is presented. A list of members of the course syllabi network is included. (SW)

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# Clearinghouse for Course Syllabi in Higher Education

EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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EDUCATIONAL POLICY

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Courses in Educational Policy

A review of course syllabi in the area of educational policy provides more evidence of ambiguity than insight into teaching in this area. Seven fully developed syllabi and three brief course descriptions were examined and it is clear that the subject of educational policy is treated rather differently among institututions. The syllabi and descriptions emanated from five institutions: Teachers College, Columbia; the University of Michigan, the University of Pittsburgh, St John's University, and the University of Chicago. It is possible either that other higher education programs do not offer courses on educational policy, that they would have labelled such courses something else, such as public policy (see Schuster essay), or that they simply did not respond to the request for syllabi.

Of the syllabi and descriptions reviewed, one course is an introductory course in higher education looking quite broadly at "purposes and policies" in higher education; two examine politics and policy analysis in education with little special attention to the higher education arena; and five examine the relationships between higher education and the federal government or state governments or both. One course focuses almost exclusively on the substance of higher education policies (e.g. curricular policies, fiscal polcies, personnel policies); five emphasize the policy process usually at federal or state levels (e.g. structures, actors, modes of operation, key legislation); and two are concerned primarily with methods of policy analysis (e.g. defining the policy problem, developing and analyzing alternatives, cost-benefit analysis). Three courses pay attention to both policy issues and policy processes (two at state and one at the federal level), while two combine issues, processes and analytical techniques (one for higher education, another for all education levels).

The courses on federal government relations treat the broad issues of public policy for higher education, the nature of the relationships between the federal government and higher education, legislative and budgetary processes, and the agencies and interest groups in the higher education policy arena. One course delves extensively into the area of federal support for academic science.

The courses on state government relations emphasize the state role in the establishment of the state higher education system; the characteristics of the system; state level structures for decision making including state coordinating and governing boards, legislative and executive agencies; and processes for resource allocation, planning, program review, and interaction

with private institutions. One course includes field trips to three state capitols.

Required readings for the five courses with detailed syllabi are quite diverse and it is clear that there is nothing approaching a "text" in this area. There are many overlaps among the supplementary reading lists provided for students, however. On the fundamental question of the relationship between higher education and the state, the following, along with various selections from the Carnegie Commission, Carnegie Council on Policy Studies and Carnegie Foundation, appear frequently:

Bok, Derek. Beyond the Ivory Tower: Social Responsibilities of the Modern University. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982.

Hook, S., Kurtz, P. and Todorovich, M. The University and the State. Buffalo: Prometheus, 1978.

Bailey, Stephen K., "Education and the State" Educational Record, Winter, 1974, 5-12

Readings on the federal government and educational policy often include:

Finn, Chester E. Scholars, Dollars & Bureaucrats. Washington, D.C.: Brookings, 1978.

Gladieux, L. and Wolanin, T.R. Congress and the Colleges. Lexington: D. C. Heath, 1976.;

while those at the state level include:

Millett, J. D. Politics and Higher Educaiton. University of Alabama Press, 1974.

_____ Conflict in Higher Education. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 1984.

Berdahl, R. O. Statewide Coordination of Higher Education. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1971.

Readings from outside the field of higher education used for purposes of pursuing issues of politics, policy, and policy analysis include:

Allison, G. T. Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1971.

Wildavsky, A. The Politics of the Budgetary Process. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 2nd edition, 1974.

_____ Speaking Truth to Power. The Art and Craft of Policy Analysis. Little, Brown and Co. 1979.

Dunn, W. N. Public Policy Analysis. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1981.

The above list gives the false impression that educational policy courses are "dated". While the "classics" do appear with the greatest frequency on reading lists, most syllabi include a preponderence of current articles and reports which vary with the specific focus of the course. Most courses require students to write one or two papers but they are usually allowed to select the topic. In some courses a policy analytic paper is required.

It appears, then, that educational policy courses in higher education range from introductory courses utilizing the term "policy" to denote fundamental issues and purposes as well as complex social, economic and political relationships to mid-level courses which focus on federal and state relations and the process for formulating policy at these levels, to more specialized courses in which concepts of politics and methods of policy analysis are applied to the study of higher education at federal, state, and institutional levels. It would seem advisable to clearly distinguish between the more generic, "issues-based", use of the term policy and the more specific practices of policy formation and policy analysis.

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ASHE ERIC

# Clearinghouse for Course Syllabi in Higher Education

A group of Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) members are forming a national higher education network for course syllabli. (See box.) The activity, sponsored by ASHE's Committee on Curriculum, Instruction and Learning, promises to be of great benefit to new and experienced teachers in higher education.

If you wish to participate, please send your latest course syllabi to the appropriate members of the network today. These individuals have committed their time and effort toward the following:

- syntheses reviewing course syllabi received with an evaluation of what is happening in each area (e.g., course titles, emphases, major works and resources in use, syllabi models, trends, observations), along with a few exemplary syllabi to be made available via the ERIC Clearinghouse on Higher Education by the end of 1985
- abstracts for inclusion in an essay on "Course Syllabi as Instructional Resources," to appear in the 1986 edition of ASHE's Instructional Resources Handbook for Higher Education
- updates of the essay/abstract in four years.

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To establish a viable clearinghouse, your help is needed. Please flood members of the network with your course syllabi and suggestions. Help establish a higher education clearinghouse for course syllabi.